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Thus far, then, the views contained in the memorial which has been recently presented to the Earl of Beaconsfield by a number of gentlemen professionally engaged in the promotion of higher education, as to the importance of giving increased prominence to the study of ancient Art as a branch of classical training, will meet the full sympathy and support of men who are interested in Art education. The Head Masters of Eton, Harrow, and Dulwich, have united with those of Merchant Taylors, of the City of London School, and of Westminster, and with numerous professors (including one of Pastoral Theology) of the London colleges, in requesting the Prime Minister to give assent to an undefined scheme for the formation of a Museum of Casts from the Antique. We do not wish to undervalue the advantage which may be derived from the formation of any new museum. Still, when a body of instructors, who, however eminent they may be in their respective lines, do not include a single name proper to Art in their list, ask for new facilities for study at the public expense, it is pertinent to put the question, How far have these gentlemen availed themselves of the resources actually open to their use?

The tie suggested by the memorial between the new museum and the educational establishments represented is that of forming a provision for the delivery of lectures upon the history of Greek sculpture. This is a worthy and a noble aim. It is not to the credit of English universities, colleges, and seats of high education, that for what is required in this respect English teachers are almost wholly indebted to German writers. We can conceive nothing more adapted to quicken the study of the dead languages than such a series of lectures, if delivered by men of learning, of taste, and of genius, equal to the task. But what need to intrude on the overtaxed time of the Prime Minister to ask for his aid in a matter so wholly within the competence of the memorialists? Why do the Head Masters of Eton and of Harrow follow the example of the rustic made immortal by Æsop, who cried to Hercules to get his cart out of the rut? Why do they not set their own shoulders to the wheel of their own cart? The memorial is said to come from London and its vicinity; and the London schools and colleges furnish most of the memorialists. But the two questions which we have to put are—What new museum would be so central or so superior in any respect to the institutions already existing as to serve for an extra lecture-room for Eton, Harrow, Dulwich, Westminster, Christ Church, Merchant Taylors, University College, and King's College, London? and secondly, supposing such a central position to be found, in what manner is it proposed to utilise it for the benefit of the pupils at these establishments?

The first thing required, in order to give any value to the scheme, would be the appointment of fit lecturers. The choice here, we fear, is extremely limited. A mere perfunctory discharge of such a duty would have the effect of disgusting students with the very

name of classic Art, even as the cram examinations which are bearing such serious evils are now disgusting our young men with every subject which they are compelled to cram. But if a man with the blood and fire of the artist, and with the learning of the classical scholar, be asked to give such lectures, he may be safely trusted with the care of the illustrations.

One of two modes must be followed in such a case. The lectures must either be given at the several schools, or the scholars must attend the lectures at the place selected. In neither case would the simultaneous presence of a number of models be required for the illustration of the subjects. Two or three examples would be as much as would be desirable for each lecture. That establishments like Eton and Harrow should go a-begging to Government to pay for twenty or thirty plaster casts which would adorn their libraries or halls, and be as much part of the machinery of education as grammars and dictionaries, is unheard of. And if anything like a peripatetic or roving lecture be contemplated, why should not use be made of materials ready to hand?

There are in the British Museum, with a great deal of Roman sculpture of secondary value, not a few fragments of unsurpassed beauty of the best Greek school; and there are fine examples of what is second only in artistic value to the sculpture of the time of Phidias and Praxiteles, the portrait sculpture of imperial times. We can cite, on a moment's reflection—besides the immortal Elgin Fates and the frieze and metopes from the Parthenon—the torso of a Cupid in Pentelican marble; the torso of a Nymph, unfortunately discoloured by fire; and the bronze mask of a female, possibly a Hypnos, which are equal to any fragments of antique sculpture known to exist in the world. In the latter instance, too, the object is admirably illuminated. Then, for the second class of examples, the head of Julius Cæsar is a work of the very highest class. Several of the imperial portrait statues, if they were only properly lighted, would appear to be no unfit companions. Some of the later Greek sculpture is of great interest, even if illustrating a conventionalised and debased treatment. Why should not the Eton, Harrow, and other classes, attend lectures on sculpture in the Sculpture Hall of the British Museum, at times set apart for the service?

No study of any cast or reproduction is equal to the study of the real antique. This study, however, even in Rome or in any European capital, must be limited in its subjects; it will, therefore, very properly be aided by a collection of casts. It cannot be too strongly insisted on that this order should not be reversed; the casts, however perfectly executed, can but ill perform the function of the originals. Their subsidiary and imperfect nature must be carefully impressed on the student. Indeed, unless there be so much Art instinct within him as to lead him to feel this difference after a very few lessons, his æsthetic education will never be more than superficial.

F. R. C.

EXCAVATIONS IN THE ROMAN FORUM.



THESE excavations have been continued regularly; seventy-two thousand cubic feet of earth having been removed. The whole extent of the *Via Sacra*, comprised between the temple of the Divine Pius and the Arch of Titus, has been revealed, in part also by means of exploration-wells opened to clean out the great *cloaca* under the street. This *cloaca* is found so well preserved that it will soon be restored to its primitive use. Although the depth as yet reached is still much higher than the ancient one, yet already the summits of many brick buildings appear. Noticeable among these is a semicircular brick wall about four feet in thickness, opposite the northwest corner of the *Basilica Nova*. Other constructions, also of brick, with large pavings of the same material, have appeared in the lowest part of the *Via*. They probably were connected with the temple of Romulus.

The topography of this part of the valley of the Forum has been enriched with a new very important explanation. It is inscribed upon a large marble slab half-broken, which was discovered in front of the Ostian basilica, on the placing of the scaffolds and machinery necessary for the raising of the new columns to the portico. The date of the stone is A.D. 223, when L. Roscius Ælianus and L. Marius Massimus held the fasces for the second time. The emperor, then, whose name has been erased from the monument, must have been Alexander Severus. The inscription remains thus:—

LARIBVS . AVG . ET .

P. CAES [] II. FELC..
AEDICVLAM . REG . VIII . VICO . VESTAE..
A SOLO PECVNIA SVA . RESTITVER..
NIVS PIVS L. CALPVRNIVS FELIX..
C. IVLIVM . PATERNVN . PRAEF. VIGILEM..
L. ROSCIO AEL..
CVRANTIBVS . M. SERVILIO . CRISPO . ET . M. SERV..

The Region Eighth included the Forum, where, upon the Vico of Vesta, must have stood then the little temple to the household gods of Alexander Severus, the restoration of which is commemorated upon this stone.